

## **The Story of the Five Finger Shoes - backwards**

Yes - I'm the one who's been spotted at the club in those magnificent pink and orange slippers with separate toes. And no - it's not as easy as simply putting them on and going for a run. Please read the story - backwards...

### **The End**

.....and the moral of the story is that you should never try to run in minimal shoes until you have run barefoot for at least 3 months. It takes this long to change your running form .....Too Much Too Soon leads to injuries.

### **The Middle**

I started the transition to barefooting in April - and just walked barefoot round the house and garden for 2 months. This was followed by 4 months of walking barefoot around the countryside and towns, mixed with a barefoot running programme that started at 1 (yes - ONE) mile. By building up slowly I'm now able to run 9.7 miles barefoot (no, I won't claim the 0.3 until I've actually done it!)

When I could run 6 miles - about the distance of a club run for my group - I started to practise with the Vibram Five finger (VFF) shoes - 'sprint' model. Yep - back to 1 (yes, ONE) mile.

So now I can run my usual distances in VFFS or barefoot depending on the terrain and the light. Hence my current preference for VFFs through Hayle in the wintry dark.

### **The Beginning - short version**

About a year ago I got some new trainers - same make and model as always - but they didn't suit - lots of little niggles during the winter while I was marathon training with Caroline and John (not my marathon - hers!) finally went to see Steve Bloor - at Natural Feet /Run Right Step Free in Helston - who persuaded me that feet don't need shoes - most of the time.

So here I am - happy, comfortable, injury-free so far and a converted barefooter (yes, I am concerned about the winter - but my feet are much warmer than before already!!)

If you fancy giving it a go - please do a lot of reading - here are some suggestions of books and websites. And treat barefoot/minimalist running as a new sport - take it slowly - you have to change your running style/form - but it seems to pay off in the end - there are loads of testimonials from folk who have been doing it for years.

<http://naturalfeet.co.uk/> Steve Bloor - lots of links to follow

<http://www.barefooters.org/> The Society for Barefoot Living

<http://therunningbarefoot.com/> Ken Bob Saxton - has done 70+ barefoot marathons

[http://www.amazon.com/Barefoot-Running-Step-Shoeless-Technique/dp/1592334652/ref=sr\\_1\\_1?s=books&ie=UTF8&qid=1320222892&sr=1-1](http://www.amazon.com/Barefoot-Running-Step-Shoeless-Technique/dp/1592334652/ref=sr_1_1?s=books&ie=UTF8&qid=1320222892&sr=1-1) good instructions

[http://www.amazon.com/Born-Run-Hidden-Superathletes-Greatest/dp/0307266303/ref=cm\\_lm\\_f\\_tit\\_2\\_rlrsrs0](http://www.amazon.com/Born-Run-Hidden-Superathletes-Greatest/dp/0307266303/ref=cm_lm_f_tit_2_rlrsrs0) a story

[http://www.amazon.com/Barefoot-Book-Great-Reasons-Shoes/dp/0897935543/ref=cm\\_lm\\_f\\_tit\\_2](http://www.amazon.com/Barefoot-Book-Great-Reasons-Shoes/dp/0897935543/ref=cm_lm_f_tit_2), the book to start with - about living barefoot - not just running

## **Prologue**

Why go barefoot?

Barefooters don't get bunions, black toenails, blisters, athlete's foot, plantar fasciitis, hallux valgus, toenail fungus, Morton's neuroma, hammer toe, fallen arched, deformed toes, ingrown toenails, bla bla bla

Barefooters do get strong arches, strong foot muscles, more flexible feet, strong ankles, robust skin, a natural gait, an increased chance of avoiding hip and knee pain, increased awareness of surroundings, improved posture!! and a big bunch of other stuff.

**Julie Hanson**